

REMARKS

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the non-final Office Action issued on May 2, 2006. By this response, claims 1 and 7 are amended. Claim 8 is withdrawn pursuant to a previous restriction requirement. No new matter is introduced. Claims 1 - 7 are now active for examination.

The Office Action dated May 2, 2006 rejected claims 1 - 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Ohishi (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0053956). The Examiner is thanked for the courtesy of a personal interview conducted on July 27, 2006. During the interview, differences between the claimed invention and the cited document were discussed. Proposed claim amendments, as those presented herein, were considered by the Examiner. The claim amendments clarify that the information storage device is remotely located from the vehicle (i.e. off-vehicle at an information center). In contrast, Ohishi's entire navigation system is located on-vehicle and information is not acquired from a remote information storage device/database. The Examiner acknowledged that the amended claims sufficiently clarify the differences between the claimed invention and the cited document, but cautioned that the patentability of the claims will be determined upon further review and/or prior art search.

It is respectfully submitted that the anticipation rejection is overcome in view of the interview discussion, and the amendments and/or remarks presented herein.

Claim 1, as amended, describes an information providing apparatus that allows a user to customize voice guidance for use in a subsequent dialogue with the user through an automatic voice response via a telephone line. Desired information is stored in an off-vehicle information storage device, and is provided based on information collected from the dialogue between the user and the apparatus, via a telephone line. Appropriate support for the amendment can be

found in, for example, Figures 3 and 5, and page 15, line 23 through page 17, line 2 of the written description. Thus, an exemplary system according to claim 1 allows a user to customize and edit audio guidance that is used in a subsequent dialogue with the system, such that the audio guidance includes only selections associated with information or options that are frequently used by the user, to reduce the time needed for subsequent audio guidance and dialogues, without the need to go through fixed layers of menu selections to obtain the desired information.

In contrast, Ohishi's entire navigation system is located on-vehicle and information is not acquired from a remote information storage device/database. Furthermore, although Ohishi provides pre-recorded voice guidance to guide a user to go through different layers of selection menus, the voice guidance is preset by the system and cannot be customized by a user for later access to Ohishi's system. Accordingly, Ohishi does not allow a user to customize audio guidance used in a subsequent dialogue with the user through an automatic voice response via a telephone line, as described in claim 1. Since Ohishi fails to disclose every limitation of claim 1, Ohishi cannot support a prima facie case of anticipation. The anticipation rejection is untenable and should be withdrawn. Favorable reconsideration of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 7 includes descriptions similar to those discussed in claim 1. Therefore, claim 7 is patentable over Ohishi for at least the same reasons as for claim 1.

Claims 2-6, directly or indirectly, depend on claim 1 and incorporate every limitation thereof. Thus, claims 2-6 also are patentable over Ohishi by virtue of their dependencies from claim 1 as well as based on their own merits.

CONCLUSIONS

For the reasons given above, Applicants believe that this application is in condition for allowance, and request that the Examiner give the application favorable reconsideration and permit it to issue as a patent. If the Examiner believes that the application can be put in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representatives listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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